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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/661,807	09/12/2003	Philip Andrew Deal	11867/19	7382
757	7590	12/21/2005	EXAMINER	
BRINKS HOFER GILSON & LIONE P.O. BOX 10395 CHICAGO, IL 60610			HARMON, CHRISTOPHER R	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3721	
DATE MAILED: 12/21/2005				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/661,807

Applicant(s)

DEAL, PHILIP ANDREW

Examiner

Christopher R. Harmon

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11 October 2005.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-10 and 27-39 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) 1-10 and 36-38 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) 27-32 and 39 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 27-31 and 39 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Green, Jr. et al. (US 4,862,905) in view of Schubert et al. (US 3,834,285).

Green, Jr. discloses an apparatus and method for inserting objects in a continuous supply of rod filler material 22 by rotating disk member 50; air jet 155 for insertion/assuring ejection; and then subdividing the continuous rod at predetermined intervals. Green, Jr. does not directly disclose a horizontal rotatable pan with a plurality of stems to lift objects, however Schubert et al. teach a rotatable pan (perpendicular to the axis of rotation) with stems 119 lifting objects 11 through holes for joining cigarette filter plugs; see figure 5. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use the rotatable pan and stem transfer method and apparatus in the invention to Green, Jr. in order to deliver objects to the vertically rotatable member for subsequent insertion into the filler material.

Regarding claim 39, Shubert et al. disclose pivotable holders 89 for moving objects via cam and arm 91 from an interior center portion of the horizontal pan to a peripheral portion of the pan proximate the holes; see figure 4.

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3. Claim 32 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Green, Jr. et al. (US 4,862,905) in view of Schubert et al. (US 3,834,285) as applied to claims 27-31 and 39 above, and further in view of Applicant's Admitted Prior Art (AAPA).

Green, Jr. discloses that the cutting assembly severs the rod at intervals synchronized with the insertion of pellets by a suitable manner; see column 9, lines 1-10. The common knowledge modification in the previous Office Action that visually detecting the objects is such a suitable manner and would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use a visual detection system is taken to be admitted prior art because applicant failed to traverse the examiner's assertion of official notice.

Regarding the common knowledge modification previously taken (Official Notice), in order to adequately traverse such a finding, an applicant must specifically point out the supposed errors in the examiner's action, which would include stating why the noticed fact is not considered to be common knowledge or well-known in the art. See 37 CFR 1.111(b). See MPEP 2144.03(c) and also Chevenard, 139 F.2d at 713, 60 USPQ at 241.

Allowable Subject Matter

4. Claims 1-10 and 36-38 are allowed.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: Claim 1 contains multiple limitations in "means plus function" form and since they meet the analysis set forth in MPEP 2181, the Examiner assumes that applicant wishes to invoke 35 USC 112, paragraph 6. In particular the "means for delivering said object from a

radially inward portion of the pan to a radially outward portion” is considered the pan with troughs 78 extending radially away from the center as described in the specification (page 13, paragraph 0053) is not taught by the prior art in combination with the apparatus for providing rods (smoking articles) with objects spaced at predetermined intervals therein.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled “Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance.”

Response to Arguments

5. Applicant's arguments filed 10/11/05 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. In response to applicant's argument that the references fail to show certain features of applicant's invention, it is noted that the features upon which applicant relies (i.e., the peripheral face of the horizontal pan is not in perpendicular alignment with the axis of rotation) are not recited in the rejected claim(s). Although the claims are interpreted in light of the specification, limitations from the specification are not read into the claims. See *In re Van Geuns*, 988 F.2d 1181, 26 USPQ2d 1057 (Fed. Cir. 1993).

Conclusion

6. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

7. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP

§ 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

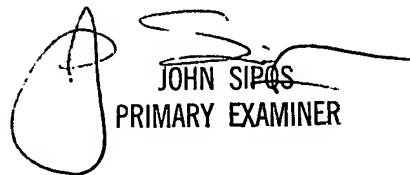
A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Christopher R. Harmon whose telephone number is (571) 272-4461. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 9-6.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Rinaldi Rada can be reached on (571) 272-4467. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


JOHN SIPOS
PRIMARY EXAMINER

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